GI Junkies: The Forgotten Veterans - Richard Kotuk

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27hxZlG7P4U (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27hxZlG7P4U)

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FOR SIMILAR FILMS: http://richardkotuk.com/ - Vietnam veterans who are physically and psychologically wounded receive no hero's welcome because of their drug addictions. GI Bill, educational benefits as well as medical benefits are not available to them. All they come back home to are heroin and methadone on the streets of New York.

Richard Kotuk (November 23, 1943 – February 10, 1998) was an award winning American journalist, producer and documentary filmmaker. He directed and produced Travis, a 1998 documentary film for which he won a George Foster Peabody Award. He was also the producer of the well known WNET news programs Bill Moyers Journal and The 51st State. His works are notable for their connection to the downtrodden especially in and around New York areas.

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the United States and doing nothing for us man we busted I asked we went over there to an army to kill and the 99 percent of us got killed and we didn't get nothing for it may give us a piece of paper that says to us will fear Nam veteran and we can get disability and we can get this and we can get a job and we have got welcome the war in Vietnam is over and the junkies are coming home angry and scared and strung out in New York City there are 300,000 Vietnam era veterans and 40,000 of them are addicts most of them began using heroin barbiturates and amphetamines in Vietnam and most of them came home with less than honorable drug-related discharges these GIS are ineligible for veterans educational home loan and employment benefits they get no long-term VA medical or psychological treatment for their addiction they're offered only methadone a numbing drug with with some men can function and others can [Music] I went to Vietnam September of 1969 and during the time that i was there i went to certain experiences that led me into using drugs and one of the experiences that we call was during a night ambush I killed that 12 year old kid you know it was something that I couldn't handle at that time you know seeing him dead laying on the ground the next morning it

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laying on the ground the next morning it really stayed on my mind so I started using drugs and I kept that up until I came back to the states when I used to do buddy have fear that was the whole thing about it to keep myself going through the day in combat I would get high I would be under the influence of some type of drugs and I wouldn't I wouldn't feel fear but after coming down from the drugs I would stop feeling fear and that's when I would go back to get high again I didn't want to really be there I was afraid I was lonely homesick I wanted to be home most of all afraid I was even afraid of returning home at one time because of my addiction I was thinking of how am I gonna get my fix when I arrived to the States even though i did receive the Silver Star and Bronze Stars medals from Bala I didn't know I was no hero how were you treated ah by the military and by society very bad opportunities i did have I didn't have any job I couldn't find one treatment programs they didn't exist method on I didn't want to get into method on because I was just another clutch another drug what that make you feel like all that rejection like I was back in the norm the Veterans Administration offers the addicted vet no rehabilitation for retraining just a six-week methadone

detoxification program in a VA hospital or indefinite outpatient methadone maintenance and while methadone may kill the need for heroin it's more addictive than heroin and the VA treats only 988 men New York City treats four thousand more with methadone with two thousand on waiting lists but that leaves 35,000 addicted Vietnam veterans without treatment the

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Vietnam veterans without treatment the cities welfare department has responsibility for providing public assistance for 6,000 Vietnam vets many of whom are addicts as early as 3 every morning the vets begin lining up outside the understaffed veterans welfare Center on eighth Avenue the glass doors of the center have been replaced with steel they were destroyed early this winter by vets battering against them to get in well I tell you what I wasn't here for god I just got here about 805 so how come you up at the front of the line you're gonna try and pull your way in here i am i'm going in when the crowd goes in that's not fair to I fed your brother's online though is it yeah only the strong survive it's a dog-eat-dog world out here you gotta believe it well in his last right and that's no lie but I push your head of them huh watch me watch me watch me they made us kind of muscle why not act like and be more until we get out checking someone out of there then when you review that was a situation more than two months ago and although Robert Carroll director of community affairs for the department promised in a statement on december six 1972 that within one month the bets would be in and out of the cold now two and a half months later the men are still freezing you can see you can see right now we standing out here in the cold from dudes be here from like you got to get here at three o'clock in the morning it's five below zero like that don't make no sense see when you when you in the front line and welfare is just like being a Vietnam freeze your hair so that's the last thing still gonna fight you gotta fight actually you don't because when I came down here on the 19 of last month to go upstairs pick up my check that it was on the third floor then I'd my regular floor when I

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floor then I'd my regular floor when I went up there to lady called me a [__] I had often a mouth you did my check I went to all telephone company for jobs and like it's helping you don't have enough education to do the job your wrinkle y'all school is not high enough but my school was high enough to do three years in Nam but it's not high enough to connect the line and telephone building if I could get me a job where I could be my own man that makes me think that they feeling sorry for me give me this give me what I need this like a pet like a dog you don't like give him hindi eat you have to be fed now giving us some food you know anybody make people start out on the line you understand and wait you understand we instill when I got my fingers blowing away the numbers there wasn't no wait you understand why me how I feel about America well I tell you what [__] this is I was born here you understand I was born here yes I live this is my home nothing I feel all right about it but I say treat a person like they supposed to be treated yes little like a human being acting on his own Alfonso you Cano director of the veterans welfare Center invited channel 13 to film inside but the following day he told us he'd spoken with mr. Carroll and that carol had told him to withdraw his invitation when we arrived to film the next morning mr. you Cano met us at the door you invited all the naughty knocking by job you invited excuse me to please take your hand away pack it up no pieces you invited anybody nothing bachem you did invite me and I can tell me I'm sorry did you speak to mr. K you invited me I did not walk in the comment what's going on in there that we can inside the center the vets wait and wait the Vietnam vets plus 10,000 from other

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the Vietnam vets plus 10,000 from other Wars a total of sixteen thousand have just 55 workers in this one building to help them they come back day after day and if you're an addict and take your methadone and addicted veterans must take methadone to receive welfare you get a check every two weeks for eighty dollars veterans with drug-related discharges receive no unemployment insurance jobs are so hard to find that 75,000 or twenty-five percent of the Vietnam vets in New York or without them and every veteran discharged with a history of drug abuse has special program number 384 a code for drug abuse permanently

affixed to his records information which is freely available to the public and employers [Music] lately Times Square has become a place where addicted Vietnam vets hang out they sit in the bars stand in doorways you can find them here every night of the week strung out in the cold neon on heroin methadone cheap wine they buy and sell drugs even hustle their own bodies for the price of getting high grants is a favorite spot and very quickly the transition from war hero to junkie takes place somebody your eye on right now I'm my omentum what I methadone doing for you is it helping you getting me high getting behind that's all I got hook and get nine you know with with drugs so

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get nine you know with with drugs so then I thought I came from over there you know they told me well you have to go through soon a application anything so you know I couldn't get any job somewhere so i went to the warfare center and they told me is you need her you have to do is this you have to get into a metal program and I did if you don't get invited on program you will be able to get help and I told them that means that all to get hook into a metal on when I was looking on dope already in Vietnam for me to kill her dr. Mendelson wet those are the roots so I said to myself I told me you know that's what I said to myself that's very funny watch you like a hawk Oh metal on you know I would like to know I'll always help am i angry sure I'm angry why shouldn't I be angry I was born and raised in the United States I'm a party rican in this way I will tell you that I me Puerto Rico is an independent country and we came here and we went to fight for the United States and Videl phone why can't we have the same benefits that the United States people have if we can fight for them why can't they fight for us Vietnam better when I went for a job and they sent me to the state employment agency you know what they told me well I see you have a minor infraction here for public intoxication while driving a motor vehicle so I said what that mean I did three tours over there to voluntary tools you didn't send on about that low infraction when I was over there fighting and killing people the majority of my friends from our Brownsville hollowman memphis-style some of them some of them don't have no mother

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some of them don't have no mother [__] waste from down to up someone can't see someone majeste shell-shocked you dig it out lucky I got a [__] a chinese-made rifle bullet in my [__] foot make me feel like I want to kill every [__] who made me go over there every every [__] who said I had to go that goes from the [__] put the stamp on the letter will send me to token to the [__] Buster took me to Fort Dix every single one of their mother [__] that's I in the South Bronx a state-funded program called sera service for education and rehabilitation and addiction has been working with returning addicted vets at the DMZ or drug mending zone the vets most of whom have been through the same experiences and share the same problems try and get each other sometimes harshly to open up one addicted veteran returned home to find that his wife had left him and when I got there she wasn't dead so my father-in-law was there with the kids so I asked the way she had so he tells me she's up in New Jersey with some other guy yeah I'm saying that did that [__] to me because we were just beginning to start another you know like a new relationship between me and some kind of understanding which we never got from Jump Street your lady's shagging up with somebody else she's in bed with somebody else your best friend's probably wearing your pajamas right now you know so [__] it let them enjoy himself you in Georgia so what happens to you now now you keep dwelling on it you split from here behind there you go shoot dope behind it or you just going to learn to deal with [__] like that like you're at the [__] door but you don't want to open it here's your one [__] up cat and I've been watching but last four [__] days man all this [__] you've been going through you've got a lot of [__] in your [__]

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you've got a lot of [__] in your [__] belly and all you want to do is sit on it I want you to [__] relate to it max how does [__] that make you feel that's what the [__] we want to know what are you [__] feelings max you're [__] old lady is out there [__] some other dude Max and I want to know what the [__] that does to you I want to hit old [__] I tried talking uh no man oh just pick up and smack them on why would you pick up

his men what are the feelings max the feelings the feelings feeling that did I can't explain she found somebody else how do you feel don't you tell you can't feel nothing she's [__] somebody of how you feel about it plenty man wait I tell you to [__] though feeling type of feeling that I just want to get her in my hands man Choko poor [__] eyes out well we understand put my [__] head just grab him and just mutilate her with the [__] think I don't mother he woke up man jam if you're gonna be my wife you're gonna be my wife when I [__] you [__] somebody else you said they're talking about it you're gonna do later you know but what about you how the [__] do you feel about it aren't you try to get you in a position where you can get that [__] out and you just stuffed it off and tell them about you want to tear her head off her shoulders but what what is that going to do the math is that going to give you the satisfaction you need you know is that going to get you to function is that gonna make you a better man you don't think that lemon scent of garden here don't get feeling like that man for women are concerned if I've been hurt by people all the goddamn time you don't think of my man sitting

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time you don't think of my man sitting right here twice your [__] age has it been getting tired of getting hurt and you 20 something years old and you can continue to people kick your head you said I said I don't feel like saying nothing who the [__] you heard now what are you going to do man wouldn't make you feel no better if you could get your hands on you know because I here's a woman you love man was out there [__] somebody asking you is how that make you feel how make you feel now what you want to do it huh that's not gonna make it no [__] better hear that you can happen you know I like running well no max nozzle max what is the feeling man what is the feeling she got the whole [__] thing about Max just putting [__] can the top on it with math and fuses of that the [__] top off give yourself a chance shoulder brother where you at right well a little trucking trust is right you punk out you gonna have time to [__] 30 right expect you to reach in your [__] belly and pull out a [__] war nothing i'm talking about how to [__] you feel about he'll [__] yourself you guys not accepting max accepted she's not your woman see the community board she's anybody willing that except that she is not your woman says she's not your woman mac she is not josh here any man that can have a mac she is not yours accept the fact that you don't have a woman you got to help yourself max you got to help yourself help yourself max start helping yourself max help yourself Mack start up in South max she will love yourself max I got yourself Malzahn [__] yourself my love you're gonna split maxi hey Mac help yourself [__] off she's out the street

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yourself [__] off she's out the street she ain't worth it no more you're here man help yourself how much max it's a lot how much make me feel how much you heard hurts a lot I can't feel that max I can't [__] feel that hurts a lot I can't feel it hurts a lot I can't feel it her to LA I can't max I can't feel it it hurts a lot it hurts Allah

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